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## BOOK REVIEWS

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. A PLAY IN THREE ACTS. By Edith Gittings Reid. The Macmillan Company, New York. Price \$1.25.

The Florence Nightingale Play Competition, one of the many efforts to commemorate Florence Nightingale's centennial, resulted in twenty-eight plays being submitted to the Committee appointed to study them and award the prize of \$500 offered by the Central Council for Nursing Education. This Committee consisted of Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske, Marylka Modjeska, granddaughter of the famous actress, Alice Beer, and Lillian D. Wald,—persons whose fitness for the task was unquestionably great. The play submitted by Professor Harold Newcomb Hillebrand, of the University of Illinois, was awarded the first prize. Much as we would like to read this play, it has not been published. A second play, "Florence Nightingale," by Edith Gittings Reid was awarded honorable mention. It is a happy privilege to have this fine study in attractive book form. Far be it from me to question the judgment of the Committee, but it is difficult to conceive of a more sympathetic presentation of Florence Nightingale's character and work than Miss Reid's. It is a clear-cut, vivid picture that does justice to Florence Nightingale's superb qualities and achievements, and shows remarkable insight and understanding of her personality. Through it all runs a strain of dignified restraint that one fancies Florence Nightingale herself would approve.

It is easy and pleasant to picture student nurses presenting this play on

various festive occasions, possibly as part of a Christmas programme, or as a new and unique Commencement exercise, and best of all it will help them to catch the spirit of our great leader. The foreword is worth reading many times, in fact it almost challenges memorizing because of its inspirational value.

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PERSONAL HYGIENE APPLIED. Jesse Feiring Williams, A.B., M.D., Associate Professor of Physical Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Illustrated. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia. Price \$2.50.

There are times when one is almost tempted to agree with the irritated lecturer who stated that "the world is suffering badly from health fads and faddists," but even a cursory examination shows this book to be free from fads, and convinces one that the author is anything rather than a *faddist*.

Without doubt interest in health today is very great. This is as it should be, for the value of health cannot be overestimated provided it is not made an end and aim in itself, but rather a means to a fuller life of worth-while service. The great value of this extremely readable book is that it aims to set forth the rules of health and to connect them with "the deep and ever-flowing source of human action where ideals, ambitions, attitudes, prejudices, hopes and aspirations are born."

It is planned for college students, not only those whose special interest centers

on the promotion of positive health and the prevention of disease, but also for students of sociology, philosophy and education. It also aims to meet the need of physicians, teachers, nurses, and social workers who so frequently require a book that they may recommend to parents or patients in need of some guide to right living.

The first five chapters present a philosophy of life in terms of aims and goals, and attempts to connect such philosophy with the problems of human living. The remaining nineteen chapters present hygiene from its scientific side, stressing always the unity of mind and body, and the harmony of life. The problem of human living is "to adjust a rather primitive biologic organism to a complex, civilized society, and to shape society to provide for man's essential biologic and social needs."

This book is a very valuable contribution to the solution of this problem; and a careful study of it, carried over into habits of right living, will go far toward helping us to rid ourselves of "health fads and faddists."

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SIGNS OF SANITY AND PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL HYGIENE. By Stewart Paton, M.D. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Price \$1.50.

Like all of Paton's books, the above is impossible to review adequately in a limited space. As its title suggests, "Signs of Sanity" deals with the ingredients of individual organization that make for a well-balanced personality. Mind is not treated as the exclusive product of brain, but as the expressive

output in behavior of the whole individual, (somatic, endocrine, psychological). "Sanity measures the physical and mental qualities that enable a person to face critical situations in life successfully, and not merely to sit down and think about them."

In language understandable to the laymen, Dr. Paton describes the characteristics of healthy adjustment found in "The Sound Body" and in "Soundness of Mind." These chapters stress a fact which apparently escapes a large number of people, and that is that the final test of a sound mind is sane conduct, not merely intelligent thinking.

The concluding chapter, "The Principles of Mental Hygiene," is devoted to a sketch of various kinds of preventive psychiatric work which is being done in this country by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and by other agencies, particularly those which have to do with child problems. The author calls attention fearlessly to the great opportunities for such constructive work which are being missed by our schools and colleges who feed their students to such an extent on "information pie" "that they constantly suffer from mental or other symptoms of intellectual indigestion. \* \* \* The extreme high tension of our American life, combined with the crowded curricula and the variety of extra-academic interests, all tend to produce conditions in our schools and universities that are unfavorable for acquiring the art of sane, as well as original and creative thinking."

This book should be in the library of the teacher, the nurse, the social worker, the physician, and anyone else who has the privilege of contributing a bit toward